Therianthropy

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Therianthropy

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Ficlet for #SpookySlick Fest 2020
True Mates / ~~Dead Mates / Undead Mates~~

A Halloween call out to the derelict fairground leads to a chance meeting.

Notes

From my monthly prompt fill: Haunted Fairground + We always see vampire Hannigram but what about shifter? Maybe Will is an unusual shifter (penguin, platypus, cocktrice?). Maybe Hannibal is the Big Bad Wolf who wants to eat poor Will, but changes his mind because Will is so interesting.

Therianthropy

#SpookySlick //
True Mates
AO3: TigerPrawn

Will rolled his eyes as he listened to the call through on his radio. Another commotion at the old fairground.

He picked up his radio and replied back into it, “Dispatch, I’m that end of town, I’ll check it out.”

Will turned at the junction and started towards the abandoned, derelict fairground.

It had been on the outskirts of the town since before he was born. A relic of the town’s heyday as a tourist destination. It had all come crashing to an end when a ride went wrong and a whole bunch of kids were killed. It devastated the town, and the owner drank himself into an early grave.

As a child it had been an intrigue, listening to ghost stories about the haunted fairground on the edge of town. As an adult, a cop, it had become the bane of his existence every Halloween and most full moons.

For at least a week running up to Halloween they would get multiple callouts. Always teenagers, some as dares, others after procuring liquor from older kids, all set on scaring the shit out each other with no care for the lack of safety in walking around a derelict site.

When Will pulled his car up at the gates, he wasn’t surprised that they had been pushed apart as far as the heavy chains would allow, and propped open by some wood. This wasn’t the first time he’d seen such a tactic and he doubted it would be the last.

With a sigh he grabbed his torch and got out of the car.

Shining a light on the ground he could see footprints leading through the gates. He squeezed himself through and with a heavy sigh carried on down the central plaza.

There was nothing. No noise, no movement, not even the scared chuckling of teenagers trying to be brave. Sounds travelled strangely in this place, he knew there was someone there.

“This is Officer Graham, if you-” Will started to call out, but he was cut off by a scream.

On instinct he unlatched his holster, his hand settled on his sidearm, ready to draw.

“Run, go go.” The teenagers voice came out of nowhere, and then suddenly there were three of them running at him.

“What’s going on?” Will asked, trying to sound calm as he raised both his hands to try and quiet the kids as they came to a stop in front of him.

They were clearly terrified, but Will was sure it was nothing more than kids scaring themselves with stories and shadows and spooked by the creaking of old metal.

“There was a guy back there, really freaky. He was like… furry. It was…” The kids all started talking at once then about the strange man that had jumped out on them.

“Well kids, you know this place is off limits. Why don’t you all just get on home before I call your parents about your trespassing. And in the meantime, I’ll take a look at what we’ve got here.”

The teens all nodded and took off again towards the gates, still looking more terrified than relieved.

Will cocked his head, listening again for any sounds, and then he honed in on it. A sound he knew well. With another sigh, he started into the dilapidated structures.

*

Hannibal watched from a distance as the officer talked with his dinner.

Or what he had planned for his dinner until this man happened by and compelled them to leave.

He didn’t seem as though he had quite as much meat on him as the three tender teens, but Hannibal was willing to settle for Officer Graham if he had to.

Hannibal stalked through the skeletal remains of the rides and stalls, one eye on his prey at all times.

He enjoyed giving himself over to his wolf instincts when he hunted, choosing to still his form between wolf and man for his own pleasure. Able to hunt like a wolf but enjoy it as a human, it was a life beyond compare.

Or so he thought.

As he grew closer he caught the man’s scent and that was enough to stop him in his tracks.

Not a wolf, but certainly *something*. Something more than met the eye. Hannibal watched intently, intrigued. Moving closer so he could catch more of that scent. Not wholly human, and certainly only a scent another non-human would catch.

The officer continued to look around, checking here and there with his flashlight but then he stopped at a collapsed piece of a long defunct ride. He looked around, and for a moment Hannibal wondered if he had been discovered.

But no. Satisfied that there really was no one there to see him, the officer rolled up one sleeve to the elbow and let out a grunt of concentration as his arm began to grow and crack. He sprouted scales and claws and then used that huge, terrible hand to lift the debris that would have been too heavy for his human form.

A shifter. An alligator.

Hannibal blinked and his mouth ran dry as his cock hardened. An omega shifter, he could scent that now. An egg-layer no less. Hannibal practically salivated.

His reverie was broken by the gator's soft chuckle.

One moment he was leaning down and then he stood again with a small, dirty puppy in his arms.

"Is it you that's been haunting this place?" Officer Graham chuckled again and then set the debris back down before cradling the young dog in his arms. The gator one of which was rapidly returning to human form.

Hannibal trembled at the power. He'd met many shifters in his life, but none were so in tune with their own self to do as he did, as this alligator did, and so completely control their forms.

The thought made Hannibal shudder. Oh, how he would love to knot Officer Graham.

The officer shuffled the puppy in his arms and started back towards the exit at a slow pace, nonchalant. And Hannibal found himself drawn to follow him.

He was barely feet away when he realised that the pull wasn't just intrigue. There was a connection with this man, this shifter, and it almost winded Hannibal to realise it.

Of all the shifters he'd met he'd never felt this before, the long held legend or perhaps rumour, that all therianthropes had a true mate.

Hannibal stopped dead in his tracks as the thought settled in his mind.

And a few steps later, the officer stopped. Without turning he said, "I know you're there alpha. Are you going to come with me or do you plan just to hang around here and continue scaring idiotic teenagers?"

With a grin the gator turned, and Hannibal found himself irrationally jealous of the content puppy settled in his arms.

As his gaze lifted from the canine to the shifter, Hannibal felt something frightening pull within him. Something more terrifying than anything he'd ever known. A sudden and profound fear that he might lose this omega.

Along with it the absolute realisation that there was indeed such a thing as true mates.

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